


Lesson 1 correcting sentence fragmen

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Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

Grammar Writing

PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

Lesson 1: Correcting Sentence Fragments

What is a sentence fragment?

Identify which of the following are sentence fragments. Be prepared to explain your answer.

1. Thanks for telephone work on.
2. Mr. Yang a perfect clearing on the mountain.
3. We watched the nature channel there there.
4. Because the sky was clear that night.

How to fix a sentence fragment

Determine what part is missing from each sentence fragment below. If the subject is missing, write S. If the verb is missing, write V. Then change the fragment into a complete sentence by adding the missing part.

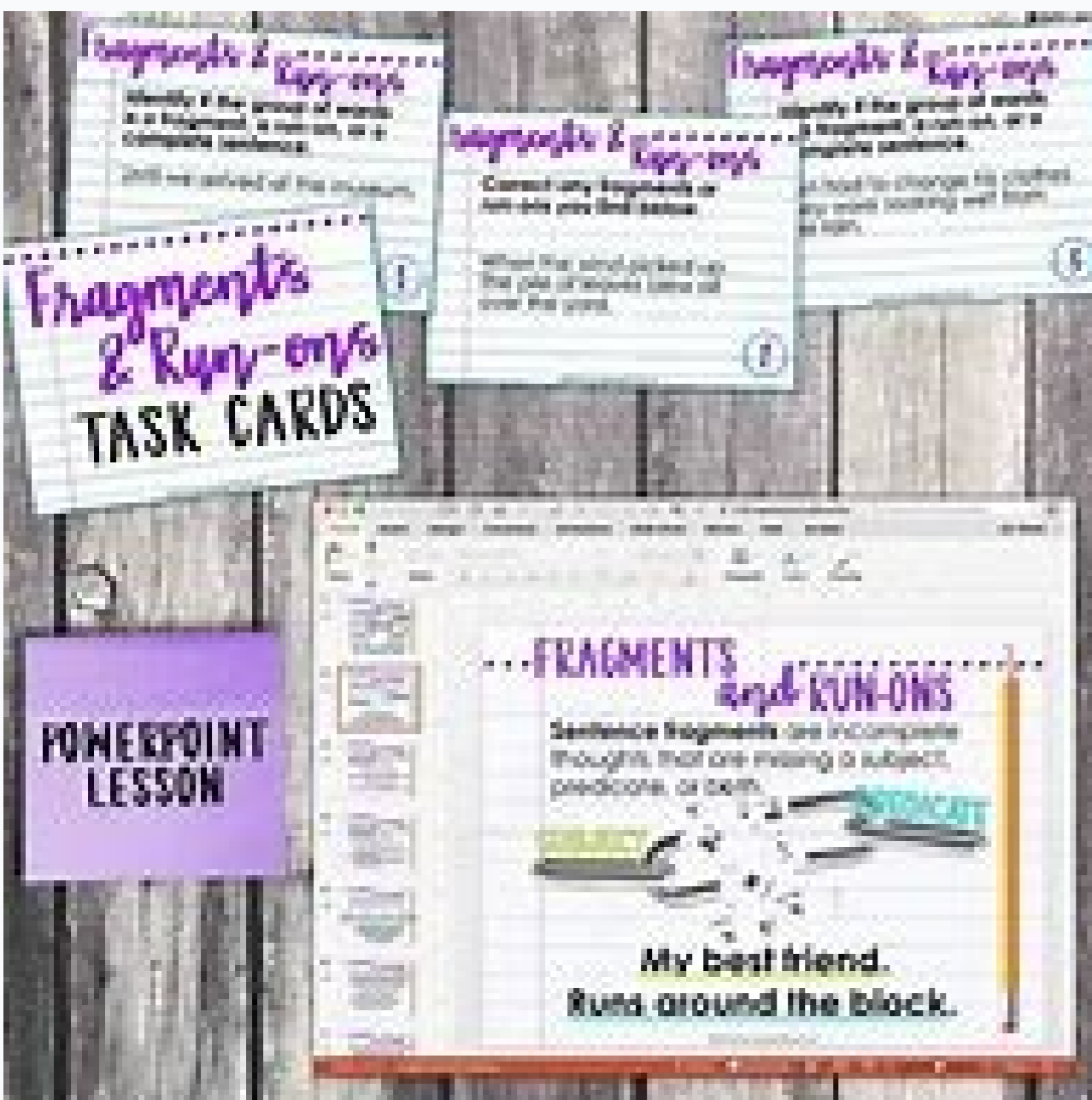
_____ 1. Play on the park every day.

_____ 2. The man from the edge of the road.

_____ 3. Watched at the bus stop for an hour.

_____ 4. The dog happily the ball.

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Didn't find what you need? Search our website or email us. A fragment is an incomplete sentence. It cannot stand alone because it is not an independent clause. It either lacks a subject, a complete verb (or both), or it might be a complete sentence but because it begins with a subordinating word (such as "when" or "because") it does not express a complete thought. It is a dependent clause—dependent on something else to complete its meaning. Let's look at some examples. I went to the store yesterday. The subject is "I" and the verb is "went," and the sentence expresses a complete and independent thought. Look at what happens when we add a subordinating word: When I went to the store yesterday. We need something else to complete the thought—we don't know what happened when we went to the store yesterday. Now we have a fragment. To fix this kind of fragment, we must add it to another complete sentence. When I went to the store yesterday, I bought some milk. Another type of fragment occurs with "after thoughts" (usually a dependent clause or a phrase that adds detail) that need to be joined to the previous sentence to complete its meaning. For example: We are really going to have to hurry. Because we overslept and missed the bus. The emphasized words finish the thought of the first sentence, so they need to be joined to the first sentence. We are really going to have to hurry because we overslept and missed the bus. Notice here that a dependent clause added at the end of a sentence is not preceded by a comma. In addition, some fragments are caused by verbal and prepositional phrases: Running down the street. This verbal phrase is a fragment because it lacks a subject and a complete verb. It can be fixed two ways. One would be to add the subject and the missing portion of the complete verb: A shaggy dog was running down the street. Alternatively, this phrase can be added to an independent clause as an introductory phrase: Running down the street, two little girls chased their shaggy dog. Also, in addition to the above, there are a few commonly used phrases that can very easily be fragments if not joined to an independent clause. When proofreading your work, look for the following "red flag" words: "Because" - We were late to class this morning. Because we overslept and missed the bus. "Especially" - I hate going shopping at the mall. Especially during the holiday season. "Such as" - Freshmen tend to have a lot of problems adjusting to college life. Such as managing their time, maintaining a budget, and balancing work with play. "Which is" - My roommate has more clothes than anyone I have ever met. Which is why there is no room in the closet for any of my clothes. In all of the examples above, the red flag words in bold signal the beginning of a dependent clause that cannot stand alone. Thus, these dependent clauses are fragments that need to be connected to the main clause that precedes them. We were late to class this morning because we overslept and missed the bus. I hate going shopping at the mall, especially during the holiday season. Freshmen tend to have a lot of problems adjusting to college life, such as managing their time, maintaining a budget, and balancing work with play. My roommate has more clothes than anyone I have ever met, which is why there is no room in the closet for any of my clothes. More Tips for Detecting Fragments Many fragments occur when phrases provide a lot of information but do not contain a proper subject and verb relationship. Below are some examples: A series of prepositional phrases: After the game but before the other team went home. REVISED: After the game but before the other team went home, the student body threw a celebration party for both teams because it was such an excellent competition. Notice here we added an independent clause to tell what happened. A verbal phrase that provides description: Staying late after work every day in hopes of meeting the deadline. REVISED: Staying late after work every day in hopes of meeting the deadline, Sheila existed on leftover pizza and stale donuts because she didn't have time to eat a proper dinner. Again, we added an independent clause to tell what happened. Nearly a sentence but missing part of the complete verb: Some of the students acting in the play this spring. Remember that "ing" verbs must have an auxiliary verb with it to function as the verb of the sentence. Without the auxiliary, it is just a verbal (which usually functions as an adjective). REVISED: Some of the students were acting in the play this spring. Here we simply added the missing auxiliary of the verb. ANOTHER REVISION: Some of the students acting in the play this spring were from Spain. Remember, fragments often have nothing to do with sentence length, but instead are fragments because they are missing something to make them complete sentences. For example, the following sentence is long, but it is a fragment: Staying up until 3 in the morning to finish papers, eating cheap fast food, spending hours in the library looking for books to finish a project, enjoying cold pizza for breakfast, trying to remember everything the professor said about World War I in time for the test, ignoring friends, and leaving messages from parents unreturned during finals week. REVISED: Staying up until 3 in the morning to finish papers, eating cheap fast food, spending hours in the library looking for books to finish a project, enjoying cold pizza for breakfast, trying to remember everything the professor said about World War I in time for the test, ignoring friends, and leaving messages from parents unreturned are just a few of my bad habits during finals week. Resources

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